

**PAJARO VALLEY WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

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June 30, 1998

Mr. Rick Breitenbach
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 94814

**Re: Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact
Report for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program**

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

The Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. The PVWMA is responsible for managing the water resources of the Pajaro Valley and ensuring a long-term water supply for the area. The major issues impacting the long-term viability of water supply in the Pajaro Valley are groundwater overdraft and seawater intrusion. The PVWMA adopted a Basin Management Plan in 1993 and certified an associated EIR the same year. The Basin Management Plan offered solutions that include development of local supplies, groundwater recharge, importation, and conservation. The PVWMA has subsequently been pursuing development of all of these elements.

The PVWMA offers the following comments on the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (Programmatic EIS/EIR) relative to those issues facing the PVWMA and management of water resources in the Pajaro Valley.

1. The PVWMA has completed several studies since adoption of the Basin Management Plan in 1993. These studies, listed below, have all been focused on refining the proposed project presented in the Basin Management Plan, and have included development of local and imported supplies. The three most important documents completed by the PVWMA since adoption of the Basin Management Plan are:
 - Pajaro Valley Local Recharge Project: Phase I Final Report, CH2MHill, November, 1994,
 - Pajaro Valley Water Supply Project, Project Definition Report, Montgomery Watson, February, 1997,
 - Water Supply Project Summary Report, Montgomery Watson, May, 1998.

The description of the Projects Considered in Development of the No-Action Alternative should include recognition of these additional developments toward implementation of water supply alternatives in the Pajaro Valley.

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2. In conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation, the PVWMA has applied to the State Water Resources Control Board for a change in the place-of-use for the water rights held by the Bureau of Reclamation to allow CVP water to be transported and utilized for irrigation purposes in the Pajaro Valley. The Programmatic EIS/EIR should therefore recognize this application relative to the potential use of "common pool" water in the Pajaro Valley and should include the Pajaro Valley in the description of the Study Area.
3. In June, 1998, local Measure D was passed by the electorate. This measure provides specific direction to the PVWMA for development of additional water supplies for the next ten years. Specifically, Measure D establishes the following requirements.
 - Local water supply projects are to be developed prior to implementing any water importation projects.
 - Water importation can not occur within ten years unless a separate, later measure is passed by the electorate.
 - The PVWMA must execute a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for CVP water at the earliest possible date.
 - Water augmentation fees, which serve as the basis for financing PVWMA projects, can not exceed \$50 per acre foot unless a separate, later measure is passed by the electorate.

The net result of the passage of Measure D is to require the PVWMA to develop local projects, execute a contract for CVP water, and delay construction of an importation pipeline until local projects have been developed and their collective effectiveness has been measured. And since Measure D requires the PVWMA to contract for CVP water, we request that the Pajaro Valley projects be incorporated into the No-Action Alternative.

4. The PVWMA is presently undertaking preparation of a series of environmental documents that address the actions, facilities and management strategies necessary to effectively manage the water resource issues facing the Pajaro Valley. All of these documents are scheduled for public review in mid 1998, with completion and adoption in late 1998. The documents being prepared by the PVWMA include:
 - An Environmental Assessment prepared pursuant to NEPA for assignment of a CVP water delivery contract from Mercy Springs Water District to the PVWMA,
 - An Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report that addresses CVP contracting issues and a change in the place-of-use of the federal water rights associated with the CVP for use of CVP water in the Pajaro Valley,
 - An Environmental Impact Report that addresses the environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed Import Pipeline that would serve to connect the San Felipe system of the CVP with a local distribution system proposed for the Pajaro Valley, and

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- An Environmental Impact Report that addresses the environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed local water supplies and local water distribution system.
5. The Water Use Efficiency Program described in the Programmatic EIS/EIR is important to the long-term viability of water supply development in California. The PVWMA supports the notions of incentive-based programs and preserving local flexibility. However, the draft documents do not provide adequate detail required for "demonstration of appropriate planning and implementation" of water use management prior to receiving any "new" water made available by a Bay-Delta solution or to participating in a water transfer requiring approval of a CALFED agency. Although such solutions are not clearly defined at the present time, it is possible that the PVWMA could participate in future transfers, exchanges and other actions requiring approval of a CALFED agency. We therefore request that greater detail and specificity of the documentation requirements be included in the Programmatic EIS/EIR.
 6. The PVWMA is continuing to work closely with the California State Water Resources Control Board to address the groundwater overdraft and associated seawater intrusion issues facing the Pajaro Valley. The focus of the PVWMA is to implement actions, programs, and projects necessary to avoid basin adjudication and limit restrictions on extractions.
 7. The PVWMA continues to evaluate long-term opportunities to participate with Santa Clara Valley Water District and San Benito County Water District, the existing CVP San Felipe Division Contractors, in water management, banking, and exchanges that would result in net benefits to all participating agencies. The PVWMA has also evaluated options for assignment of CVP contract water from other federal contractors, and may pursue such evaluations again in the years ahead.

The PVWMA wishes to thank the CALFED Bay-Delta Program for its efforts in preparing the Programmatic EIS/EIR. Please do not hesitate to call me should you have any questions regarding our comments or the progress made by the PVWMA.

Truly yours,



Charles McNish
Interim General Manager